

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 A-01 SY-05 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00

/074 W

-----126747 201203Z /44

R 200530Z JUL 77

FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9042

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL IZMIR

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ISTANBUL 2392

FRANKFURT FOR RSS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, ASEC, TU

SUBJECT: POLITICAL VIOLENCE ESCALATES

REF: ISTANBUL 2084

1. WHILE ANXIOUS NATION AWAITS RESULTS OF EFFORTS TO FORM NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT IN ANKARA, POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN RECENT WEEKS HAS AGAIN FLARED UP IN ISTANBUL. SERIES OF INCIDENTS WHICH BEGAN IN MID-JUNE (REFTEL) HAVE ESCALATED INTO PREDICTABLE CYCLE OF ATTACKS AND COUNTER-ATTACKS BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT-WING GROUPS. FOLLOWING SHOOTING DEATH OF STUDENT AT HANDS OF RIFHTIST "KOMANDOS" (REFTEL, LEFTISTS STRUCK BACK JULY 6 WITH VERY LARGE EXPLOSIVE DEVICE AT SUB-PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS OF NATIONAL ACTION PARTY (NAP), UNOFFICIAL SPONSOR OF "KOMANDO" YOUTH ORGANIZATION. ALTHOUGH NO ONE WAS INJURED IN EXPLOSION, IT CAUSED MAJOR

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STRUCTURAL DAMAGE TO BUILDING (SIMILAR TO BOMBING AT BESIKTAS RIGHTIST YOUTH OFFICE LAST MAY) AND AMOUNT OF EXPLOSIVE USED WAS MUCH GREATER THAN HAS BEEN USUAL PATTERN IN ISTANBUL'S NUMEROUS PREVIOUS POLITICAL BOMBINGS. SAME DAY ISTANBUL HOME OF HEAD OF NAP-ASSOCIATED LABOR CONFEDERATION WAS BOMBED. NEWSPAPERS CARRIED STATEMENT BY NAP SUB-PROVINCIAL CHIEF BLAMING ACTION ON REPUBLICAN PEOPLES PARTY

(RPP) OF PRIME MIINISTER ECEVIT.

2. IN APPARENT RETALIATION, A RPP SUB-PROVINCIAL OFFICE WAS BOMBED JULY 15. THEREAFTER REACTION TIME HAS BEEN MUCH SHORTER. NEXT DAY, HEAVY EXPLOSIVE SHATTERED PROVINCIAL OFFICES OF LEFTIST TEACHER'S UNION TOB-DER, AND FOLLOWING DAY ANOTHER BOMB WAS THROWN AT A LOCAL NAP LABOR GROUP'S OFFICE. NEWSPAPERS ARE NOW REPORTING BOMBINGS IN VARIOUS SECTIONS OF CITY ALMOST EVERY DAY.

3. COMMENT: WITH LOCAL LEFTIST AND RIGHTIST GROUPS SQUARING OFF WITH SUCH INTENSITY, IT IS FORTUNATE THAT CITY'S UNIVERSITIES ARE CLOSED UNTIL NOVEMBER FOR SUMMER VACATION. FACT THAT VIOLENCE IS ESCALATING DESPITE LACK OF HEAVY STUDENT CONCENTRATIONS ON CAMPUSES IS INDICATION OF HOW HIGH ANTAGONISM BETWEEN IDEOLOGICALLY OPPOSED YOUTH GROUPS HAS RISEN IN CURRENT CHARGED POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT. HIGHLY DISTURBING ELEMENT OF LAST FEW MONTHS IS CAPABILITY OF BOTH LEFTIST AND RIFHTIST GROUPS TO PUT TOGETHER INCREASINGLY LARGER EXPLOSIVE DEVICES CAPABLE OF SEVERE DAMAGE TO BUILDINGS AND WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR KILLING AND MAIMING LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE (ALONG LINES OF ISTANBUL AIRPORT BOMBING IN MAY). WHATEVER GOVERBMENT COMES OUT OF MANEUVERS IN ANKARA, ONE OR THE OTHER MILITANT GROUP IS GOING TO STRONGLY OPPOSE IT AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO UNDERTAKE FURTHER VIOLENCE IN PROTEST. BATTLELINES ARE ALREADY DRAWN IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ISTANBUL AS SECURITY PROBLEM CONTINUES DESPITE RPP'S AVOWED INTENT TO BRING IT UNDER CONTROL.

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